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The Fallacy of The Military Strategic Objective

by

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A paper submitted to the Faculty of the Naval War College in partial satisfaction of the requirements of the Department of Joint Military Operations.

The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Naval War College or the Department of the Navy.

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04 May 2011

Abstract

In today's globalized world of an increasingly complex and unpredictable enemy, it is absolutely critical that U.S. leaders, both civilian and military, have complete understanding of how the different instruments of national power can contribute towards the achievement of national strategic objectives. In Irregular Warfare (IW), it has been proven throughout history that a superior military force alone is not enough to guarantee the achievement of strategic level objectives making cooperation with the agencies that represent other instruments of power absolutely essential in order to reach a political Desired End State (DES). U.S. doctrine further insists that the military instrument of power should only be employed when the other instruments have been completely exhausted, but in reality this principle is seldom applied in U.S. policy or strategy. The premise of a military strategic objective is a fallacy which serves to segregate the means by which strategic objectives are pursued and ultimately jeopardizes achievement of the DES. This paper analyzes the theory behind strategic objectives and their relationship to the instruments of national power, compares this relationship to current U.S. doctrine, and then applies both theory and doctrine to recent military operations. It is through this examination that the fallacy of a military strategic objective is revealed. The many problems associated with this fallacy are brought to light through a historical analysis of Operation JUST CAUSE in Panama during the late 1980s and more recently during Operation IRAQI FREEDOM. The paper concludes with proposed changes for the future as potential solutions to these problems and further makes recommendations in order to facilitate these changes which are presented as a way ahead.

The Fallacy of The Military Strategic Objective

If there are any enterprises which are particularly likely to break up the enemy's alliances or make them inoperative, to gain new alliances for ourselves, to raise political powers in our own favour, &c. &c., then it is easy to conceive how much these may increase the probability of success, and become a shorter way towards our object than the routing of the enemy's forces.

-Carl von Clausewitz
On War

When the President of the United States made the decision to commit military forces to Libya in March of 2011, he knowingly did so with a preponderance of U.S. forces already supporting major combat operations in both Iraq and Afghanistan. The American military instrument of power was now committed to a third theater of operations and this deployment of forces came without a clearly defined Desired End State (DES).¹ With this in mind, it has arguably never been more important in the history of the United States that both the civilian and military leadership have an absolutely clear understanding of the relationship between strategic objectives and the instruments of national power at their disposal to achieve them.

Terrorism and the irregular nature of warfare today present the United States with an increasingly confusing and complex enemy which makes it critical that the national strategic leadership understand this relationship as it applies to American policy. With the prevention of collateral damage and civilian loss of life becoming a critical restraint for the United States, military forces may find themselves playing an unconventional role in current theaters of operation. Commanders at every level of warfare must be able to synchronize all the instruments of national power through extensive collaboration between military and civilian agencies representing a range of governments, intergovernmental organizations, and nongovernmental organizations.² Operation JUST CAUSE in Panama serves as a classic example of what can happen when all of the instruments of national power are not adequately

leveraged toward the DES. Many of the problems that manifested themselves in Panama were unfortunately re-experienced by the United States during Operation IRAQI FREEDOM. Both of these operations suffered from the similar flaw of the fallacy of a military strategic objective which serves to segregate the means by which strategic objectives are pursued and ultimately jeopardizes the achievement of the DES.

In order to better understand the potential dangers of attempting to achieve a strategic objective by military means alone, it is important to first understand the theory behind objectives and their relationship to the instruments of national power. With this foundation in place, an analysis of the theory as applied to current U.S. Armed Services doctrine will reveal a significant misconception with both, which if unrecognized, can seriously hinder the strategic outcome. With this false notion having been identified, it is equally important to consider the influences and reasons for its existence. Some of the influences that resulted in this concept can better be justified than others and prudence demands that potential counter-arguments be explored and considered. The problems associated with the notion of military strategic objectives will be made evident primarily through analysis of Operation JUST CAUSE in Panama with corollaries made to Operation IRAQI FREEDOM. Lessons learned from these operations provide the necessary insight to make sound recommendations in order to better equip the United States for strategic success in the future.

In the study of warfare, few would argue with Carl von Clausewitz and his assertion that the conduct of war is merely a political instrument, in essence a continuation of policy by other means.³ It is critical to understand this relationship of war as an instrument of policy but it is equally as important to understand that military force is only one of many such instruments. Policy can be defined as a pattern of actions designed to accomplish objectives

and represents a conscious effort by a government to use power to achieve a political DES.⁴ When the United States considers its instruments of national power to be levied towards this DES, they are divided into the four primary categories of Diplomatic, Informational, Military, and Economic (DIME). These four instruments of power serve national strategic leaders as their primary means of achieving a DES, and each one should be considered in its entirety as well as how it relates to the other three when applied in concert. When considering the means and ways towards the political ends, a balancing act must occur in order to mitigate risk to the United States. In order to mitigate the risk to American service members, the military instrument of power should only be employed in conjunction with the other instruments as a critical enabler if they have proven ineffective without it. Sun Tzu said it best when he stated that “to fight and conquer in all your battles is not supreme excellence; supreme excellence consists in breaking the enemy’s resistance without fighting.”⁵

If policy is the framework about which a nation’s DES is determined, strategy is the attempt to balance the means and ways to achieve it. The National Security Strategy (NSS) of the United States attempts to articulate the country’s national interests, objectives, policies, and commitments linked to the use of the instruments of national power.⁶ The NSS serves as a form of strategic guidance for operational commanders, and for it to be of any value, it must define a DES and provide objectives that when accomplished, will lead to the realization of the DES. In the 2010 NSS signed by President Obama, he outlines a national focus on renewing American leadership in order to advance U.S. interests in the 21st century through the expansion of our domestic sources of strength while shaping an order abroad that can meet present and future challenges as the ways and means to U.S. political ends.⁷ In

short, any strategic guidance should provide a balance between the objectives, the methods, and the resources available (ends, ways, means).⁸ Once this strategic guidance is issued by the President of the United States (POTUS), strategic objectives can then be developed by civilian and military leadership that directly support achievement of the DES as stated in the guidance.

If it has been established that the DES is derived from U.S. policy and it is through strategic objectives that leaders attempt to balance the means and ways to their political ends, then it seems only logical that all strategic objectives are political in nature. This is a point of debate that potentially runs into problems concerning the appropriate use of the instruments of national power. Although admittedly often one in the same, it has been argued that strategic objectives can be further categorized specifically as either political or military.⁹ The rationale behind this argument is the claim that political and military strategic objectives differ considerably from each other. The theory here is that the political strategic objective reveals the ultimate purpose of the entire effort, while the military strategic objective identifies what role the military instrument of power will play towards the ultimate aim of policy and strategy.¹⁰ The logical argument to this theory would be that if the ultimate aim of the military strategic objective was one of policy and strategy, which are both political in nature, then the objective is really a political strategic objective. The instrument of national power used towards the achievement of the strategic objective is irrelevant to the nature of the objective itself. This is why one does not encounter diplomatic strategic objectives, informational strategic objectives, or economic strategic objectives in theory or doctrine. They are simply all strategic objectives, they are all political in nature, and one should use all of the instruments of national power in order to achieve them. If the decision is made to

apply the military instrument of power towards a strategic objective, Clausewitz serves as a reminder that the political end state, as the original motivation for going to war, will serve as the standard for determining both the objectives of the military force, and the degree of effort that those forces are to make towards the objectives.¹¹

Having identified this potentially deadly misconception in the theory behind politics and warfare, it is necessary to analyze current U.S. guidance and doctrine to see how they balance this relationship between strategic objectives and the primary instruments of national power. In his National Defense Strategy (NDS) of 2008, Defense Secretary Robert Gates outlines his strategic guidance to the Department of Defense (DOD) which will best support the President's NSS. The NDS supports the objectives in the NSS and further promotes the strengthening of alliances and the building of new partnerships to defeat global terrorism.¹² In the 2011 National Military Strategy (NMS), the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) acknowledges that military power alone is insufficient to fully address the complex security challenges that the United States is currently facing.¹³ This realization results in requiring military forces to often play a supporting role to other government agencies to further U.S. interests. All three documents clearly identify a strategic environment in which the DOD must expand its cooperation and coordination with international partners as well as with other U.S. departments and agencies if they are to successfully balance the means and ways to American political ends. Furthermore, the February 2010 Quadrennial Defense Review Report (QDR) states that a renewed international and whole of government effort will be required in order for DOD to achieve its priority strategic objectives of prevailing in today's wars, preventing and deterring conflict, being prepared for a wide range of contingencies, and preserving and enhancing U.S. forces.¹⁴ The United States and its allies

will use diplomatic, informational, and economic means whenever possible, but will be willing to resort to military force when absolutely necessary to defend their interests. U.S. sources of strategic guidance appear to support each other and are in keeping with the relationship between strategic objectives and the instruments of power. The *Guidance for Employment of the Force* (GEF) is the primary DOD document that consolidates and links strategic guidance to operations and activities in order to assist Combatant Commanders with the achievement of strategic objectives.¹⁵ While the Secretary of Defense promotes a whole of government approach in his direction of the military instrument of power, the U.S. Joint Publication series reverts back to the notion of military strategic objectives.

Joint Publications were designed to reflect U.S. strategic guidance and provide the framework for conducting joint and multinational activities across the full range of military operations. To its credit, Joint Publication (JP) 3-0, *Joint Operations* does acknowledge that some national strategic objectives will require a balanced use of all instruments of national power, but it quickly finds itself defining the military strategic objective as it contributes to the attainment of the national strategic end state.¹⁶ JP 3-0 correctly describes how the President establishes policy, through strategic guidance, which is then translated into national strategic objectives by the Secretary of Defense. Operational commanders then utilize “operational art” as a linkage to ensure that operations all the way down to the tactical level indeed support the strategic objectives. It is important to view strategic objectives independent of the methods used to achieve them. JP 5-0, *Joint Operation Planning* goes so far as to define a strategic military objective as a way to identify the role of military forces in the larger context of national strategic objectives. It states that the nature of the political aim, when balanced with the sources of national strength and weaknesses, must be compared to

those of the enemy along with the other factors in the environment in order to identify achievable strategic military objectives.¹⁷ This brings one back to the point that if the aims of the strategic objective are political in nature, which they always are, then it is incorrect to label the strategic objectives as “military” since there exist other means to achieve them.

It is understandable why the CJCS may want to view strategic objectives from strictly a military point of view. First, the CJCS only exercises authority over military forces so his span of control is limited to the military instrument of power. This being considered, a “military” strategic objective appears quite attractive in that military forces could achieve it alone. Unfortunately, as noted earlier, the strategic guidance accepts and very clearly points out that the military cannot achieve strategic objectives and the DES without help from other departments, agencies, and partners. Second, one could envision a scenario in total warfare, such as during World War II, where a strategic objective could in fact be achieved through military force alone, but that is a rarity in the world today. In fact, the conflicts of today continue to move further away from large scale warfare, requiring a more complex and integrated approach to achieving strategic objectives.¹⁸ Just as it was in theory, it is extremely dangerous to entertain the notion of a military strategic objective in current U.S. Joint Doctrine.

Some may argue that this is not a significant problem but merely a matter of semantics or terminology. The problem arises, however, when a fundamentally flawed concept begins to manifest itself into a mindset that, whether consciously or subconsciously, effects the decisions that senior civilian and military leaders have to make concerning the deployment of military forces. If the decision makers continue to think that the military is the answer to all of our strategic problems, it is easy to see how the other instruments of

power can be left off the table at the expense of our military forces. Military leaders may also view military strategic objectives through a very narrow perspective that fails to recognize the importance of such objectives to the grander strategy and political DES. The current strategic guidance seems to value the importance of all the instruments of national power and alludes to the military as the instrument of last resort, but this principle still does not appear to be guiding the decisions that are presently being made. Historically this was not the case as will be shown through analysis of Operation JUST CAUSE in Panama during the late 1980s. Because of operations like JUST CAUSE and the rapid evolution of IW, the United States is being forced to reconsider the way it views strategic objectives but this transformation is still in its infancy. Operation JUST CAUSE serves the United States well as a painful reminder of how the notion of military strategic objectives can manifest itself if the United States does not continue to adapt its approach to resolving modern conflicts.

Upon first glance, the immediate rationale behind President George H. W. Bush's decision to launch Operation JUST CAUSE into Panama on the 20th of December, 1989 seems clear and adequately justified. Just four days prior, on the night of the 16th, four U.S. servicemen had been attacked by members of the Panama Defense Forces (PDF) after running a roadblock near PDF headquarters in Panama City.¹⁹ As a result of the incident, one U.S. servicemen had been killed, one wounded, while two witnesses had been detained, harassed, and one severely beaten. After more than two years of strife with Panama's dictatorship under the erratic leadership of General Manuel Noriega, this event would serve as the final "trigger" behind the United States' decision to send military forces into action with the strategic objectives of securing freedom of transit through the Panama Canal, removing Noriega and his cronies from power, and a PDF responsive to and supportive of an

emergent democratic government in Panama.²⁰ Despite the fact that Joint Task Force (JTF) - Panama was ultimately successful in defeating the PDF and was able to replace Noriega with an emerging democratic government in a matter of days, it can be argued that a more comprehensive whole of government approach might have limited the requirement for U.S. military intervention.²¹ More importantly, as it relates to the achievement of U.S. strategic objectives in Panama, was the total lack of an integrated plan to include a defined end state for the post hostilities phase (Phase IV) of the operation.²² This omission by the American civilian and military leadership led to a reactive restoration mentality in which the military had no choice but to take the lead with the end result being chaos rather than a smooth transition to a legitimate democracy in Panama. This perilous oversight poses the question as to whether the intervention in Panama should be viewed as a victory for the American national strategic leadership or as a strategic failure because they viewed the situation in Panama through the lens of military strategic objectives vice national strategic objectives which would more thoroughly consider the non-military instruments of power. Operation BLUE SPOON, publically known as JUST CAUSE, may have been a military success, but the post hostilities phase operation code named as BLIND LOGIC, which was executed as PROVIDE LIBERTY, was a strategic disaster.²³ Before examining the numerous shortfalls associated with Operation PROVIDE LIBERTY, the policy initiatives that were attempted before the actual U.S. invasion are worth a brief analysis.

Soon after President Bush took office in January of 1989, it became clear that a badly needed policy review for Noriega's Panama was not going to occur until after the Panamanian elections scheduled for May of that year. U.S. Commander Southern Command (CINCSO) General Frederick Woerner's proposal to achieve U.S. strategic objectives for

Panama was termed the “Panama Triad” and included enhanced U.S. force presence, international support/pressure, and opposition activities all of which had to be synchronized if they were to be successful.²⁴ By this point in his tenure however, General Woerner was unfairly being labeled as not a “team player” and when accompanied with his previous public statement concerning an “absence” of U.S. policy towards Panama, his reputation was irrevocably damaged in the eyes of the Bush administration resulting in his eventual relief as CINCSO by General Maxwell Thurman in September of 1989. In retrospect, General Woerner claimed that the United States had been unable to create an attainable “strategic vision” or “the decisive authority composed of political will, consensus, and resources” that was necessary but instead tried to remove Noriega through “wishful thinking” and with “rhetoric outdistancing intentions.”²⁵ As for his Panama Triad, the synchronization of the three legs never occurred making it ineffectual just like his earlier campaign plan which had weighed heavily on the non-military instruments of national power but had not received the necessary support from Washington. On 20 December 1989, Operation JUST CAUSE was executed, sending nearly 30,000 American troops into harm’s way in Panama.

In a matter of days the assault phase of JUST CAUSE would give way to post hostility Phase IV operations, effectively charging the U.S. military with laying the groundwork for a new democratic government across Panama which proved an unfamiliar and extremely daunting task for American forces.²⁶ Although JUST CAUSE had been an extremely successful military operation in that it quickly neutralized Noriega and the PDF, it gave way to the restoration phase known as Operation BLIND LOGIC, executed as Operation PROMOTE LIBERTY, which was destined for failure from its inception.

From its approval on the very day that U.S. military forces invaded Panama, BLIND LOGIC was an ad hoc and completely inadequate restoration policy that was riddled with conceptual problems.²⁷ As an inherent flaw in U.S. policy, the restoration of Panama had been given little attention and was merely an afterthought to both civilian and military leadership. BLIND LOGIC was completely reactive to the myriad of civil-military problems that emerged after the hostilities ended. In addition to underestimating the planning requirements associated with Phase IV operations, U.S. national strategic leaders failed to anticipate three major destabilizing developments after the PDF had been disassembled. The scope and severe economic impacts of widespread looting, the illegitimacy and corruption that engulfed the “installed” Government of Panama (GOP), and the emaciated state of the Panamanian treasury and societal infrastructure were all critical issues that had not been expected by U.S. strategic leadership.²⁸

To assist in the reconstruction effort and to counter these unforeseen developments, a Civil-Military Operations Task Force (CMOTF) was created from reserve units to work under the J-5 directorate as directed by CINCSO. General Thurman later attributed the mistake of placing a planning agency in charge of actual operations on the fact that his focus was primarily on JUST CAUSE, which distracted him from catching such an egregious error.²⁹ The CMOTF suffered from a number of serious flaws to include overall unpreparedness, complicated command structure, manning shortfalls, and when coupled with little guidance to begin with, made the task force completely ineffectual.³⁰

In light of these obstacles to the Phase IV operations, another ad hoc organization known as the Military Support Group (MSG) was created upon recommendation from USSOCOM in January of 1990. The mission of the MSG was to “conduct nation building

operations to ensure that democracy, internationally recognized standards of justice, and professional public services were established and institutionalized in Panama.”³¹ Typically, DOD would play a supporting role to DOS for a mission with these objectives but the U.S. Embassy in Panama was in such a state of disarray that the burden ultimately fell on the MSG. Ambassador Hinton’s situation at the embassy was in fact so chaotic that he was unable to adequately staff a country team in order to develop an integrated strategy for restoration. To make matters worse, stove-piped planning by CINCSO had left DOS and other civilian agencies effectively cut out of the planning process from the start leaving the plan for the establishment of democratic and economic stability in Panama up to the MSG. The Military Support Group essentially filled the role of embassy country team which proved more than the understaffed organization could handle without significant help from DOS and other agencies.³² The end result was a severely inadequate restoration policy.

Fundamental to the difficulties associated with the restoration policy in Panama was a failure by U.S. national strategic leadership to effectively communicate the DES. While the objective of democracy was clearly stated by President Bush and repeated in the mission statement of the MSG, it was never defined as a DES which would have further delineated the conditions in Panama which were necessary for a functioning and self-sustaining democracy.³³ If these conditions had been clearly outlined, it would have been obvious that a whole of government approach was required in order to achieve the DES in Panama. What was instead observed in Panama was the creation of two organizations, the CMOTF and MSG, which ultimately failed because they were exclusively military and they were attempting to achieve strategic objectives without contributions from the other instruments of national power.³⁴ Unfortunately, U.S. civilian and military leadership failed to learn from

their mistakes in trying to solve postwar issues through military strategic objectives, and this exclusion of the other instruments would repeat itself during Operation IRAQI FREEDOM.

The number of corollaries between the mistakes made in JUST CAUSE and IRAQI FREEDOM more than a decade later is truly remarkable. The first obvious similarity concerns the decision by national strategic leadership to even employ the military instrument of national power. It can be argued that the other instruments had not been exhausted in either case, in particular the diplomatic instrument, but the most striking corollary is between the Phase IV or restoration phase of the two operations.³⁵ Additionally, U.S. leadership again failed to adequately define the DES in Iraq which ultimately turned an operation that was advertised to take months and turned it into one which is still going on today.

Despite spending more than a year planning the invasion of Iraq in 2003, little time or energy was put into the Phase IV plan for the postwar period. Only six months from the scheduled invasion, the responsibility for the postwar plan was finally given to an already overextended CENTCOM planning staff and by giving the lead to DOD vice DOS, the plan was doomed from the start.³⁶ This staff merely produced incoherent Power Point slides and since CENTCOM Commander General Franks believed that the postwar plan would eventually be run by DOS, he created an ad hoc organization known as Joint Task Force IV with the mandate of producing a plan in the interim.³⁷ When JTF-IV also failed to produce anything of substance, a second ad hoc organization known as the Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance (ORHA) was created through a Presidential Directive but by then it was too late and the group only added confusion to CENTCOM's inadequate plan.³⁸ The use of ad hoc organizations, that were almost exclusively military, thrown together at the

last minute to plan and execute Phase IV operations failed in Iraq exactly as it had in Panama.

Perhaps the largest obstacle facing the postwar plan for IRAQI FREEDOM was the extremely dysfunctional relationship between DOD and DOS. It was no secret that Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld and Secretary of State Colin Powell had a strained relationship but the extent to which the two departments excluded and actually worked against each other is somewhat shocking. With DOD and DOS at war with each other, there was no trust between the departments at the working level so very little information was ever shared between the two.³⁹ When retired Army LTG Jay Garner was given the lead for the postwar effort just two months prior to the invasion of Iraq, he had no idea what he was getting himself into. To his credit, Garner did attempt to establish a meeting between all departments and agencies that would play a role in the reconstruction, in fact the only one that ever occurred, but by then it was far too late in the game and it was obvious that they were not going to get the resources from combat units that would be necessary to secure Iraq.⁴⁰ Things became so bad that at one point two of Garner's most knowledgeable DOS assets were removed from his team by Vice President Dick Cheney on the grounds that they were not "team players," further hampering Phase IV planning.⁴¹ With the budget for the war approaching \$400 billion, DOD was given the nod to lead the postwar efforts as the Pentagon had the necessary resources albeit a complete lack of experience with the mission. Under Rumsfeld and his policy team known as "the black hole" - DOD would have total authority and administration for the rebuilding of a country for the first time since World War II.⁴² The military instrument, just as it had in Panama, was going in alone and unafraid. Thousands of lives and billions of dollars later, democracy is still struggling to take hold in

Iraq. To prevent the fallacy of the military strategic objective from infecting U.S. policy in the future, deliberate action must be taken.

To begin with, the very notion of a military strategic objective should be removed from American analysis of warfare and also stricken from Joint Doctrine lexicon. Its existence serves to only contaminate both civilian and military leadership's approach to strategic objectives. It implies sole responsibility for achieving strategic objectives on the military and further excludes the use of the other three instruments of national power. If a strategic objective is labeled as "military," it could consciously or subconsciously influence what American decision makers see as the available means to the U.S. desired political ends which could have dire consequences for U.S. service members. Additionally, since the strategic guidance outlined in the GEF incorporates organizations representing all of the instruments of national power, it is thereby prudent that it be promulgated from a level above the Secretary of Defense which would provide its guidance to all of the appropriate departments and agencies rather than just DOD. Considering the scope of the GEF, and the fact that it is already reviewed by the President, it seems only practical that he sign it as the directing authority.

While changing the doctrine might be a relatively easy thing to do, changing the military only mindset is an entirely different matter. Some of the American civilian leadership may view the United States as somewhat of a global police force and if you want to help someone who cannot help themselves, the military seems an obvious option. Military leaders may also find themselves susceptible to a case of "blindness" in which they only see the portion of the objective that is most suited to their particular skillset. The United States has become a very impatient society due largely in part to advances in technology, and the

American people often expect immediate results whereas economic sanctions or diplomatic talks can take months or even years to prove effective. At first glance it is not difficult to see why the military instrument of power can be so appealing to strategic leaders. It is often the most resourced instrument and has proven capable of producing decisive results in very short order without the complexities related to close coordination with the other instruments. This however, is absolutely contrary to the mindset American leadership need to have in today's complex globalized environment. This shift in attitude needs to be addressed through education of civilian and military leadership alike, and more importantly by example from those currently making the high level political and strategic decisions. Joint Professional Military Education (JPME) is a critical component of this and time for in-residence programs must be allowed for leaders who might find themselves making strategic level decisions in the future. Standard 1 for all five levels of JPME is to prepare graduates to operate in joint, interagency, intergovernmental, and multinational environments and the program further stresses the relationships between all instruments of national power and the importance of the whole of government response.⁴³ Service war colleges, commissioning programs, and civilian universities are all available means to promote these principles and properly shape the mindset of future U.S. leaders.

In order to achieve national strategic objectives in the IW environment of today, it needs to be a whole of government effort from start to finish. This means that all instruments of power will play important roles starting well before any American troops are deployed, during the actual military combat operations, if indeed there are any, and then often most importantly, after combat operations have been concluded. During and postwar phases have been where the United States has repeatedly underestimated the importance of inter-

department and interagency fusion at all levels of war. The military instrument of power alone cannot guarantee the achievement of strategic level objectives. The U.S. Department of State needs to integrate with DOD as do all the other agencies and non-governmental organizations if the United States is to be successful in achieving DESs in a counter-insurgency or IW environment. A key relationship to make this happen is the relationship between the Combatant Commander and the U.S. Ambassador to the Host Nation. Communication and cooperation between these two leaders is critical and the Ambassador must assert his authority as a direct representative of the American President. Furthermore, the Combatant Commander's staff must work hand in hand with the Ambassador's Country Team before, during, and after military operations cease in order to be effective. If all of these relationships are properly maintained and valued, it will prevent U.S. national strategic objectives from becoming military strategic objectives at the expense of American troops.

Throughout recent history, the fallacy of the military strategic objective has needlessly jeopardized U.S. political end states. The very nature of IW has forced American leaders to rethink the way they view the achievement of strategic objectives lending itself to a better realization of what the instruments of national power can contribute to the DES. This realization is a critical progression that will remain theoretical unless it is practiced in real world situations. American military participation in Libya was planned by an organization that was 99.5 percent military as DOS and other agencies proved unable to provide their civilian expertise.⁴⁴ Only through a change in doctrine, a fundamental shift in mindset, and a whole of government approach at all levels from start to finish can the United States prevent conflicts like Libya from becoming another "JUST CAUSE."

Notes

¹ Jay Kernis, “Brookes: Obama Still Needs to Explain Objectives and End-State in Libya Conflict,” *CNN.com*, 25 March 2011, <http://inthearena.blogs.cnn.com/2011/03/25/brookes-obama-still-needs-to-explain-objectives-and-end-state-in-libya-conflict/> (accessed 20 April 2011).

² Barak A. Salmoni et al., “Growing Strategic Leaders for Future Conflict,” *Parameters* (Spring, 2010): 72.

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